

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A magneto-optical recording medium comprising:  
a domain wall displacement layer for displacing  
domain walls;  
5 a recording layer for storing information; and  
a switching layer arranged between said domain  
wall displacement layer and said recording layer and  
having a Curie temperature lower than those of the  
latter two layers,  
10 wherein said domain wall displacement layer, said  
switching layer and said recording layer are coupled by  
exchange coupling at temperature not higher than the  
Curie temperature of said switching layer, and the  
saturation magnetization of said domain wall  
15 displacement layer and that of said recording layer are  
anti-parallel to each other in a state of being coupled  
by exchange coupling at temperature close to the Curie  
temperature of said switching layer.
- 20 2. A recording medium according to claim 1,  
wherein said domain wall displacement layer is formed  
so that its rare earth sublattice magnetization becomes  
dominant at and near the Curie temperature of said  
switching layer, while said recording layer is formed  
25 so that its transition metal sublattice magnetization  
becomes dominant at and near the Curie temperature of  
said switching layer.

3. A recording medium according to claim 2,  
wherein said domain wall displacement layer shows a  
compensation temperature between its own Curie  
temperature and the Curie temperature of said switching  
5 layer.

4. A recording medium according to claim 1,  
wherein said domain wall displacement layer is formed  
so that its transition metal sublattice magnetization  
10 becomes dominant at and near the Curie temperature of  
said switching layer, while said recording layer is  
formed so that its rare earth sublattice magnetization  
becomes dominant at and near the Curie temperature of  
said switching layer.

5. A reproducing method to be used with a  
magneto-optical recording medium according to any of  
claims 1 through 4, said method comprising:

a step of forming a predetermined temperature  
20 distribution having a temperature zone exceeding the  
Curie temperature of said switching layer on said  
magneto-optical recording medium by means of a laser  
beam;

a step of breaking the exchange coupling between  
25 said domain wall displacement layer and said recording  
layer in a region of the temperature zone exceeding the  
Curie temperature of said switching layer and

displacing a domain wall formed in said domain wall displacement layer toward the high temperature side along the temperature gradient of the temperature distribution; and

- 5 a step of detecting information stored in said recording layer, utilizing the laser beam reflected from said medium.

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